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ABSTRACT

This report describes the levels of the Swedish educational system as it now exists, and discusses the directions which changes in educational policy may take. A principal consideration is the possibility of changing the allocation of resources to education to provide greater support for adult education. The report raises the question of whether the continued expansion of youth education is the wisest expenditure of resources, since it increases the "educational gap" between the generations. Most of the present labor force had only six or seven years of old-fashioned primary education, but 80%-85% of the younger generation receive an education lasting 11 or 12 years. A system of "recurrent education" -- education that could occur at periodic intervals after the individual has completed his compulsory intermediate schooling and begun work -- is suggested as a possible addition to the youth-oriented educational system. (MF)

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PERMANENT EDUCATION

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No. 10/1969

PERMANENT EDUCATION IN SWEDEN

by

Ulf Larsson

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I. INTRODUCTION

The debate on Swedish educational policy has been particularly intense in the past year. It has taken place concurrently with the implementation of several reforms of the external structure and internal organisation of the educational system. It has been concerned to a great extent with the goals of education and with the allocation of resources.

The discussion on the goals of education has been concerned with the more rigid course of study which is now being introduced at the faculties of arts and sciences. The Committee appointed to investigate the structure of higher education (1968 Education Committee, known as U 68) has published a review entitled "Goals for Higher Education". The goals of educational policy have, naturally, also been dealt with in conjunction with the compulsory school and intermediate school reforms decided by parliament in 1968.

The allocation of resources under present educational policy has been criticised, particularly by the Swedish trade union movement which, in a special report (The Trade Union Movement and Adult Education), advocates increased investment in adult education over and above the allocation voted by the 1967 parliament. U 68, in a second review (Higher Education, Function and Structure), presents motives and suggestions for a system of recurrent education. The Swedish Minister of Education presented the main lines of these ideas at the Sixth Conference of European Ministers of Education at Versailles (20-22 May 1969).

The aim of the present report is to give an account of the structure and extent of the Swedish education system and, against the background of recently decided reforms, to present the Swedish debate on educational policy concerning the problems brought up by the CCC under the heading of permanent education. This presentation is based on the reports mentioned above.

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II. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PRESENT EDUCATION SYSTEM

1. Pre-primary school

Pre-primary school is the name increasingly used for day nurseries and nursery schools. The day nurseries accept for full-time supervision children aged 1-6 years from families in which both parents (or the sole parent) are wage earners. Nursery schools take children for a considerably shorter period (about three hours a day), and preferentially 6 year olds. Educationally there is no difference between day nurseries and nursery schools. They are run by local authorities. The central supervisory authority is the Board of Social Welfare.

Some 32,000 children attend day nurseries and some 77,000 nursery schools. Both are expanding fairly rapidly.

2. Comprehensive school

The compulsory nine-year comprehensive school (decided on in 1962) has now been introduced in all municipalities in the country. Transitionally, however, certain remnants of the parallel school system are still in being. The comprehensive school takes pupils aged 7-16, i.e. during the entire period of compulsory schooling. It consists of three three-year stages. At the junior and intermediate levels all pupils take the same subjects on the same courses and have the same number of periods per week. Organisationally, therefore, the education is altogether undifferentiated. Differentiation starts at the transition from the sixth to the seventh class. (1)

In mathematics and English there are two courses, and during certain periods the pupils have the choice of alternative subjects. Similar arrangements exist in class eight, and in class nine the pupils are split up into nine lines.

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(1) A more extensive survey has recently been presented by J. Orring in "Skolan i Sverige" (School in Sweden)

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The comprehensive schools as a whole have a total of about 1,000,000 pupils, the national total for each class (age group) being about 120,000 pupils. A small proportion of this number go to schools for the deaf and the blind or for the otherwise handicapped.

The comprehensive school is a local government school and caters for more than 99% of children of compulsory school age. The remainder attend private schools.

By a 1968 decision of parliament certain changes are to be made in the internal structure of the comprehensive school (see III.2.2).

The central supervisory authority for the comprehensive school - as for gymnasium, continuation and vocational schools - is the National Board of Education.

3. Gymnasium

By a 1964 decision of parliament the new gymnasium is an integrated gymnasium with five lines: humanities, social science, economics, natural science and technology.

A final certificate from the third year of the gymnasium confers a general qualification for entry into universities and higher educational establishments. Pupils following the technology line can take a fourth year and become "gymnasial engineers".

The gymnasium at present takes about 30% of an age group. No decision has yet been taken to expand the gymnasial organisation. In the preliminary survey, on which the parliamentary decision was based, it was estimated that 20-25% of pupils would take the technological and an equal number the economics line, while the remainder would be divided among the other lines.

The gymnasium is a local government school. There are certain private schools as well, chiefly for boarders.

4. Continuation school

In conjunction with the 1962 decision to create a comprehensive school system, a two-year extension of it was established, also under local government management - the continuation school. The object of this school is to provide

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a mainly theoretical education in preparation for practical work directly following the end of schooling. The continuation school qualifies, for example, for a class-teacher training course, but not for university.

The continuation school has three lines: social, economic and technical.

It is being expanded so as to be able to take about 20% of an age group within a year or so.

5. Vocational school

The vocational schools principally cover the requirements of industry, commerce, office work and nursing, but they also have courses for agriculture, forestry, etc. They also provide apprenticeship courses for the handicraft trades. The vocational schools have a wide range in respect of length of courses, subject matter and specialisation.

The number of pupils on first-year courses at vocational schools totals more than 30% of an age group.

There is no uniformity as regards jurisdiction over schools. Most of the schools are run by local governments, the county councils being responsible for the greater part of the training for nursing. Vocational schools are also run by private companies and individual bodies.

6. Universities and higher educational establishments

The higher education system in Sweden consists of universities and affiliated universities, and of independent specialised colleges. There are six universities offering courses in theology, law, philosophy, social sciences, natural sciences, medicine, dentistry and technology. Independent specialised colleges exist for various categories of teacher training and for socionomy, journalism and agriculture. There is also a number of special training courses, often within the vocational schools.

A gymnasial education is required for entry into a university or specialised college. For other courses of study less extensive basic education, backed up by practical experience, may suffice.

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About 30,000 students are at present accepted for higher education every year, two-thirds of them on unrestricted intake lines.

Higher education is predominantly run by the state. Among the central supervisory authorities are the National Board of Education (for teacher training) and the Office of the Chancellor of the Universities (for the universities).

7. Adult education

Adult education is provided today both by the state and by educational organisations and private firms.

Adult education under state management is of two kinds. Labour market training has the aim of providing a new start for those who are unemployed or threatened with unemployment. It is primarily vocational; some 100,000 persons are receiving such training on a full-time basis.

Adult education organised by local government and the state is provided at all levels of the educational system and with content corresponding to that of schools and universities. Both general and vocational adult education is thus provided. It is run mostly on a part-time basis and is attended by some 130,000 persons. Radio and television are being increasingly used for adult education.

The recognised educational associations provide very extensive training facilities in the form of study circles (part-time) for a wide range of subjects. About 1.5 million people attend these study circles every year. The people's high schools offer a fairly general education on a full-time basis to about 12,000 persons.

Public corporations and private companies arrange training courses for their employees. So, too, do the various industrial organisations. The trade unions, for example, arrange some 500 weekly courses every year.

8. Expenditure

State expenditure on education and research amounts to about 8,000 million kroner per annum. Local government expenditure for the same purpose may be estimated at about 3,000 million kroner.

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For comprehensive schools, continuation schools, gymnasia and vocational schools, and for adult education at local government schools, the state bears in principle the cost of teachers' salaries and also contributes to investment and equipment costs. The local authorities bear the cost of other personnel, educational welfare arrangements, and the greater part of the expenditure on buildings.

The cost of the higher education system is in principle borne by the state.

To finance individuals' studies at continuation schools, gymnasia and vocational schools the state contributes a general educational allowance and various increments, according to the individual's financial circumstances. Incremental allowances are also paid for board, lodging and travel.

For higher studies and for students who are of age the state assumes a major financial responsibility. Such students receive a sum of about 8,000 kroner annually; the greater part of which is repayable.

For labour market training the allowances are intended to cover the individual's expenses during the period of study (including children, if any).

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III. TRENDS IN THE PRESENT SWEDISH EDUCATIONAL POLICY

1. Some common features

In recent years the Swedish education system has been reformed in respect of both organisation and content. Certain features of this development have been common to all educational levels.

1.1 As in other European countries, the interest in education has risen greatly at all levels. The extension of compulsory education has now been completed in practice; the quantitative growth of voluntary education shows no signs of stopping. Before the second world war only a small percentage of youth went to gymnasium; today the intake capacity of the gymnasial type of school (upper secondary level) amounts to 80-85% of an age group. In those parts of the country where the comprehensive school has been fully introduced, more than 90% of young people apply for further education.

The education wave now rolls on towards the higher education stage. One-fifth of an age group today go on to higher education. The interest in this kind of education is rising markedly, especially among groups who have hitherto lacked formal qualifications for entry into higher education establishments.

1.2 The various lines of study at the respective educational levels have been co-ordinated both organisationally and in subject matter. In Sweden the comprehensive school has superseded both the earlier seven-year school and a number of parallel compulsory school types, such as "realskola", girls' schools, etc. The Swedish Minister of Education, in his speech at Versailles at the Sixth Conference of European Ministers of Education, summarised the motives for the new organisationally and educationally unified comprehensive school.

> "The first motive is a desire to achieve equality and an understanding between human beings with different interests and abilities and varying social backgrounds. The idea behind a comprehensive school system is to stimulate the interest in education among pupils from homes without an educational tradition. In this way the school counteracts the division of society into

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different social layers without mutual contact. As a basis for our discussion we must recognise, I believe, that the industrialised countries of Western Europe, in spite of a startling economic progress, in many respects remain class societies in the old sense of the word.

The second motive lies in the need to effectively utilise the entire available manpower. This makes an educational system which results in the prevention of major groups from attaining an educational level corresponding to their abilities unreasonable."

The striving for comprehensiveness extends to a growing degree also to handicapped children. In his Versailles speech the Minister of Education recalled that it was long considered a matter of course that pupils with physical, mental and emotional handicaps should be placed in special schools or special classes. To postpone the integration of these pupils into a normal milieu is however to reduce their chances of finding a meaningful and relevant place in society. It has proved pedagogically possible to transfer these pupils to ordinary classes to an increasing extent. But in such cases special arrangements are generally necessary within the class. Pupils with mental disturbances or difficulties in reading or writing may need special teachers during a limited part of the time. The orthopaedically handicapped may need personal assistance and special equipment.

The motives for unification of education at upper secondary level are the same as at the lower level. But there are other motives as well. Developments in the labour market, with the increasingly rapid remoulding of the structure of industry, and the need to prepare individuals for these changes, call for an increased breadth of education for the individual. Integrated upper secondary education also allows better use to be made of buildings and material and personnel resources. It should also diminish differences of status between different courses of education. The reasons for unification of education immediately above lower secondary level must be weighed against the disadvantages of a prolongation of the time of study, and the resources such a system would require.

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1.3 In the voluntary educational system the principle of successive choice is important.

In 1964 and 1968 parliament decided on the internal organisation of the continuation school and gymnasium (1964) and vocational school (1968). All of these schools have broad aims and are organised on the block principle. This implies that initial training is common to several allied lines of education, after which a successive differentiation takes place.

Education at the faculties of arts and sciences at universities has also been reorganised in accordance with the same principle. First-year students have the option of 17 subjects, and second-year students the option of 5-6 subjects, linking up with their first option. During the third year the choice of subjects is entirely open.

1.4 The external organisational reforms must be followed not only by curricular reforms but also by a change in working methods at school, by individualisation, collaboration and participation.

The aim of the school must be to develop pupils into citizens in a functioning democracy. It is therefore necessary that pupils take an active part in and responsibility for the work of the school. The Swedish Government has issued directives for the creation of work satisfaction and a good atmosphere in schools.

In order that pupils' and students' sense of responsibility and co-operation may develop the school and the university, through their working methods and organisation, should function as a democracy. That means co-participation and co-responsibility in decisions concerning the activities of the school or the university on the part of all those who work there. In Sweden some experiments in this field have recently been started.

2. Recent reform decisions

2.1 It has been stated above that several educational reforms have been decided on in the past year. At the time of writing, these have not yet come into force and have not therefore been reflected in the account under Section II.

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2.2 According to a 1968 decision of parliament the upper comprehensive school level will be entirely unified as from 1970. The pupils will then have the same classmates throughout their whole school career. Schooling will be the same except for a total of 17 hours in the upper department. During six of these hours the pupils will participate in "work of their own choice", which means that they have to choose a special activity which interests them (e.g. cultural activities, sport, international studies, handicrafts). During the remaining eleven hours (4 in the 7th grade, 3 in 8th grade and 4 in 9th grade) pupils must choose between a second foreign language (French, German) or either culture, economics or technology.

2.3 In 1968 parliament decided to integrate the present three types of voluntary school (the gymnasium, continuation school and vocational school) into a single upper secondary school. The reform also covered the internal organisation of vocational schools on the principle of successive differentiation. The new vocational training will comprise a greater measure of general subjects than at present. Through a free choice of an elective subject pupils will be able to consolidate or intensify their knowledge of the vocational subjects, or to choose a parallel course, but still directed to a particular profession. Vocational training will usually cover two years.

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IV. PROBLEMS CONNECTED WITH THE EXPANSION OF EDUCATION

1. Viewed over a long period, increasingly large groups of youth have continued their education beyond compulsory schooling which has been prolonged: in 1842 it was six years, in 1936 seven and in 1950 nine years. As stated in 3.1.1, great expansion has also taken place in voluntary education. It may be foreseen that if no obstructions are placed in the way of future developments practically every young girl and boy will have an eleven- or twelve-year education. The large number of young people who already receive such education points to a continually growing demand for higher education, especially if the rules for admission are modified.

The 1968 Education Committee has illustrated in a diagram (Appendix A) the growing proportion of persons receiving education.

It is being increasingly questioned whether it is reasonable to allow youth education to continue to expand. The means for meeting the educational interest of both youth and adults are restricted by lack of resources. From this point of view, among others, the question of how further expansion of youth education can be arrested is being discussed.

But there are other reasons as well which point in the same direction.

2. As a result of the expansion of primary and secondary education there is now an "educational gap" between - and within - the generations. Most of the present labour force had only six or seven years of old-fashioned primary education, but 80%-85% of the younger generation receive an education lasting for eleven to twelve years.

Many adults today experience difficulties in the labour market. Practically all those who are unemployed have had a shorter basic education than nine years schooling. Adults run the risk of being outdistanced by younger workers. Their inadequate schooling also makes it difficult for them to keep abreast of the social and cultural debate. Self-realization, which is one of the aims of educational policy, cannot be reserved for young people.

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The educational gap may in part be regarded as a transitional problem requiring special measures probably over a fairly long period. The Confederation of Trade Unions in particular has emphasised the significance of measures of this kind, as they may be expected to be an important factor in the policy of equality.

3. Many people to-day experience an alienation between those who are in a job and those who have the benefit of a lengthy education. The training that young people previously received on the job is no longer a reality. There are few students today who have other experience of vocational work than temporary summer jobs.

To-day's educational system may in many respects be said to favour those who have the ambition quickly to attain a specific goal. This leads to a scramble for marks which is contrary to the educational goal. The stiff competition for vacant places in higher education tends to make the idea of collaboration at school difficult to realise. The work may be disrupted by the special requirements of higher forms of education. The will to co-operate and the understanding for others are so easily lost in the pupils' struggle for higher marks. The existing marking systems leave a great deal to be desired as instruments of evaluation. Their rigid gradation of the pupils' performance counteracts many of the efforts to create a spirit of loyalty and co-operation at school. Also from these points of view the present situation, with a wholly continuous system of education, is open to question.

The terms of reference of the Committee appointed to examine the question of the conditions of admission to higher education (the Qualifications Committee) state that it is of value to be able to recruit for a profession people of varying experience and background. A modification of the traditional conditions of entry to university and other higher educational establishments is required in order to allow persons who lack formal qualifications, but are well merited through various activities, to enter higher education on the same condition as those with formal qualifications. As from this autumn persons above 25 years of age, and with at least five years of professional experience, will be admitted to university courses in certain subjects even if they do not fulfill the general qualification requirements for entry to a university.

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4. One of the chief aims of educational policy is to bring about greater equality. A measure of success in this respect is the recruitment to different forms of voluntary education.

If the choice of education is made freely and without influence by society, then the choice reflects the social and economic background of the home. Through the structuring of the educational system, individual guidance, and educational welfare measures the government has sought to assist particularly those with inferior prospects formally and often factually. These measures, however, have not yet had their full effect. The fact is that children from higher social groups still go on to higher education to a greater extent than others. There is thus a social selection within the educational system.

Similar problems are encountered in adult education. In conjunction with the intensification of adult education facilities which started in 1967, several investigations have been made into recruitment to adult education. No final conclusions can yet be drawn, but the reports so far indicate that adult education is made use of particularly by the active, the stimulated, those who already have a sound basic education.

5. The present educational policy may thus be said to give rise to the following questions:

Economic considerations make it doubtful whether continued expansion of youth education can be combined with intensification of adult education.

There is a considerable factual difference in educational standards between, but also within, the generations.

The present educational system gives rise to some extent to an estrangement between students and workers. In this connection U 68 makes the following statement: "Since people would to a greater extent gain more similar experience through having both studied and had a job at an early stage, a recurring education - implying that at around 20 years of age people would usually have had professional working experience - should be an instrument for the development of common frames of reference."

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Within both youth and adult education those with good prospects, a good family income and good basic education make use of the available resources to a greater extent than others.

These circumstances suggest a different allocation of future educational resources in favour of a system of permanent or recurrent education. Other arguments may also be presented in favour of such a system.

6. Working life is undergoing rapid transformation. The individual's knowledge needs to be constantly maintained and renewed. This metamorphosis applies not only to the production process but also to working conditions. New and greater requirements are being placed on the individual and his adaptability. He may also desire a wider field of responsibility or more specialised knowledge and ability. The means must accordingly be at hand to enable those who in youth made the wrong choice or acquired inadequate knowledge in any field, to make a new choice. There must be no blind alleys in the educational system.

One of the goals of education is to stimulate pupils to activity outside the school walls. The school must impart knowledge which trains for social activities, for work in organisations, an understanding of cultural manifestations, for sound leisure-time activities.

The school curricula stress the importance of creating in pupils an ability for critical and independent thought. The foundations laid at school in this respect must be nurtured in adults by special means.

Education for many today is characterised by boredom, neurosis and social isolation. Nor are such problems uncommon amongst those at work. Alternation between study and work would have a favourable effect on the motivation both for study and professional activity. In this connection it may be pointed out that experience from to-day's adult education shows that adult students - who are admittedly a positively selected group - have a much greater motivation for study than the young.

U 68 has pointed to another important motive. A system of recurring education should make it possible for the individual to get to know his professional prospects step by step, and successively to adapt his studies to them. This should increase his chances of developing his aptitudes and prospects throughout life.

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A system of recurrent education, the Swedish Minister of Education stated in his Versailles speech, should further conduce to social equality.

> "The interplay between different human activities would result in their being regarded in various respects as on an equal footing. The understanding between different social groups would increase as people had more similar experiences. The relations between the generations would improve.
>
> The effect on the labour market is also interesting to speculate upon. It is probable that we would have greatly increased mobility on the labour market, as jobs to a large extent would be of short-term character. Floor-to-ceiling careers would be increasingly common. Qualified jobs would thus more often be given to holders of lower appointments within the same sphere. Here the equality aspect comes into the picture once again. Another favourable effect from the equality aspect is that the situation of the older people on the labour market would be considerably brighter, as they would have a chance of keeping up with the needs of their job."

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V. RECURRENT EDUCATION

1. As mentioned in the introduction, the debate on recurrent education started only a short time ago in Sweden. The problem of the extension of youth education and the balance between youth and adult education was admittedly brought up in the report of the Gymnasial Committee (1965) and in Bill 1967:85 concerning additional investments in the adult education field. But it was U 68 which first considered in greater detail the problem of recurrent education in conjunction with its examination of the function and structure of the higher educational system. The committee's review of this question was published in mid-June and has had a positive reception. But no extensive debate has yet taken place. The following account is therefore to a large extent based on the Committee's review.

It should be mentioned, however, that other committees as well are working on problems closely associated with recurrent education, e.g. the Qualifications Committee, which is studying the question of the rules of admission to higher education, and the Committee for Adult Educational Grants.

2. A fundamental question connected with recurrent education is that of striking a balance between youth (basic) education and recurrent education.

As already stated, nine-year compulsory schooling will soon extend throughout the country. Every young person will then have a broad, non-specialised basic education. No plans exist for further prolongation of the period of compulsory schooling. The continuation school, gymnasium and vocational school - the new "intermediate" school - have seen considerable quantitative growth in recent years, at the same time as the education provided has been made less specialised, broader, more general. There has been strong pressure in favour of the more general lines at both continuation school and gymnasium, largely because of the advantages which the gymnasially educated, in particular, are considered to derive in the form of salary and status. For this reason it has been asked, in the Swedish debate on educational policy, whether the trend is not towards a fairly broad post-comprehensive school ("youth school") education, with direct vocational education at the higher education stage. If this trend is followed, it would suggest, at all events, eleven years' compulsory schooling. Only after twelve to fourteen years of continuous schooling would the step into an occupation be taken.

It will be readily realised that this development would be contrary to the thought of recurrent education.

If an educational system different from the present one is to be conceived, an important proviso is that a person entering a career must have an education which enables him to carry out a meaningful task from his own and from the national point of view. This calls for some vocational bias in his preceding studies. It may admittedly be imagined that in due course the labour market will become adapted to a situation in which there is a considerable supply of non-vocationally trained labour. But it appears extremely doubtful whether society should assist in creating a not insignificant group of people who run the risk of landing up in poorly paid and uninteresting jobs. From this point of view it does not appear realistic to count on comprehensive school education as the common basis for a system of recurrent education.

The intermediate school today is in part vocationally oriented (vocational school, parts of the continuation school and gymnasium), and in part non-vocationally oriented (parts of continuation school and gymnasium). This is one reason in favour of the intermediate school as a basis for recurrent education. Another reason is the quantitative coverage of this school at the present time. It must be considered more logical to imagine a situation in which, in practice, everyone goes on to intermediate school directly from comprehensive school rather than the reverse. The various types of intermediate school today take 80%-85% of an age group, and in the long run it is reckoned in responsible quarters that the figure will reach 100%.

If all are to have the opportunity of going into some form of job immediately after intermediate school, the content of continuation school and gymnasial education must be reconsidered. It will also be necessary for those who aim for higher education to have some form of vocational training. The 1968 decision of parliament implies, as already noted, that vocational education will include a greater measure of general subjects than before. If, in the same way, intermediate school were to provide all pupils with a type of instruction which directly prepares them for a vocation, then this would, as U 68 points out, be a concrete expression in favour of the eradication of the boundaries between general and vocational training which, also on more general grounds, may be presumed to be a consequence of a system of recurrent education.

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According to U 68, recurrent education will also have other consequences for the intermediate school. Even today it is a specific aim of this school that all lines, to a greater or lesser extent, shall prepare pupils for continued study and continued acquisition of knowledge. The stimulation and preparation for continued study - whether theoretical or practical - will in future be an essential task.

In the system of recurrent education presented by U 68 the intermediate school is the prospective basis. Recurrent education therefore relates chiefly to the subsequent educational stage, higher education.

This does not, of course, exclude the possibility that recurring education, in the individual case, may comprise also education at the intermediate school level. For a considerable time to come, moreover, the education of adults at the comprehensive and intermediate school levels may be expected to predominate over higher education. But this is due mostly to the need to bridge the educational gap between the generations.

3. U 68 presented in its review some possible alternatives for recurrent education. It is characteristic of the recurrent system that there is no final transition for the individual from education to working life. But as appears from the earlier arguments, it may be presumed that for a long time to come the educational process will take place primarily during the years of youth. The transition to a later period - in which occupational work predominates - may come about in several different ways. U 68 has sketched some alternatives in a simplified diagram (Appendix B), but emphasises that other types or combinations of types are also possible. One should also count on different alternatives existing side by side, and with varying capacity.

U 68 states that it should be possible for the individual successively to choose the alternatives, the goals and the types which fit in with his interests and prospects. By means of information, through the requirement of vocational experience for admission to particular lines of education, through control of the means of obtaining educational grants, and in the final resort through restricted intake, the government can influence the way in which a system of recurrent education functions.

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4. It has already been stated that the choice of education is influenced by a number of factors, among which, in particular, are parents' education and financial and social status. By various measures within the school framework the government attempts to counteract such factors.

But school often comes into the picture too late to compensate entirely for the influence of the pupils' various environments. And the pupils' social and economic background, his home environment, plays an equal, perhaps greater part than the school environment during his time at school.

The first of these two points leads to the conclusion that the pre-primary school is of central importance if we are to attain our educational goal. A committee is now studying the question of a general pre-primary school.

The second point leads to the conclusion that various methods are needed both in and outside the educational field to overcome social and economic handicaps. The measures which lie outside the educational field - e.g. housing policy and cultural policy - are perhaps even more important than, for instance, student welfare, pupil guidance and extended co-operation between school and home.

We may thus recognise that no real equality can be achieved simply by eliminating formal obstacles and creating satisfactory educational facilities. An increased supply of education may favour the extrovert and enterprising. The social groups which, through the influence of the home environment, have become most aware of the importance of qualifying education will probably continue in future to make effective use of the possibilities offered by a system of recurrent education. Moreover, it may be profitable for employers to invest their educational resources in well educated key personnel, while others become ineffective and their employment is terminated. The reasons for this may be, on the one hand, that key persons have more education to maintain and that they are easier to train and, on the other, that unqualified people are easier to replace and that society will in any case come to their rescue and take charge of those who are no longer needed.

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In the discussions on the continued expansion of adult education facilities the trade union movement in particular has pointed to the risk that, for social and financial reasons, or perhaps on account of mental constitution, many will not make use of facilities or will not use them in a rational manner.

It is extremely important in this field to distinguish between macro- and micro-effects, between national economy and business economy. The real loss to the national economy of wasting manpower is probably very great in view of the cost of education, social welfare and alternative income.

It is thus necessary to devote much attention to the recruitment problem in a system of recurrent education, to the real prospects of the individual benefiting from an increased supply of education. U 68 points out that one must consider the possibilities of employers accepting young people with intermediate schooling and letting them take a full-time or part-time course of higher education later on. Information and guidance are, of course, important elements. But special significance is attached to active recruitment aimed at groups which may be presumed to have a low motivation for, or great practical difficulties with continued study. The social organs and trade union organisations should have an important role in this respect. The possibilities of control through educational grants are discussed below.

5. An essential question in connection with recurrent education is, of course, the method of its distribution. It may be as well to base the discussion on the present types of adult education.

The local government adult schools provide an education corresponding to comprehensive and intermediate school - principally in the form of part-time courses although interest in full-time study is growing rapidly. At two state schools for adults brief oral full-time courses are combined with correspondence study at home, the possibility of correspondence courses by themselves also exists. The retraining courses of the Labour Market Board primarily provide full-time vocational training. The folk high schools provide a fairly general education, likewise full-time. Decentralised university education offers facilities, full- or part-time, for those who for different reasons cannot or do not wish to leave their home area. The education associations use the study circle method,

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which is considered specially suited to individual conditions. The educational facilities provided by industrial organisations and employers are of many different types, including residential courses. And, finally, radio and television offer a growing variety of adult education.

Recurrent education should make use of many different distribution methods to meet the varying desires of individuals.

It may be expected that for education away from home, full-time study will be the normal form. The absence from home will then be fairly short. Part-time studies are today the same as leisure-time studies, but in future they may also take place during working hours, either on the job, or during partial leave of absence.

If recurrent education is really to be available to all, modern technical aids must be used on an extensive scale. Since 1967 the Committee for Radio and Television in Education has been both conducting practical tests in different fields, and evaluating and drawing conclusions from them. It is already clear that education by radio and television, and particularly courses for adults, require a very large number of channels. It seems inevitable that within the not too distant future Sweden must arrange for additional channels over and above the present three nationwide broadcasting networks. The relevant technical prospects may be judged to be satisfactory. In the longer view it is conceivable that computer-controlled education may also be used. It is highly probable that integrated systems of teachers and technical aids must be created. This will require extensive research and development work.

The individual's choice of type or method of education may be affected by several factors. It may be an advantage to be able to take a part-time course in order to test one's ability to study without losing contact with a job which provides both financial and social security. But study undertaken simultaneously with a full-time job also calls for a great measure of ambition, educational interest, and physical and mental stamina. Compared with full-time study, part-time study has been considered to require very much less support in the form of educational grants. Against this, of course, must be weighed the greater length of time required owing to the slower rate of study, and the fact that a restriction on this form of study may arise if grants are not made to students on partial leave of absence, with corresponding loss of salary.

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6. An important question connected with recurrent education, as has appeared earlier, is the form of educational welfare. This involves a number of subsidiary problems.

6.1 As far as the public educational system is concerned, no charge is made to the individual. As it may be assumed that recurrent education will also be part of the public educational system, no charge should be made for such education either. In this context the question of free textbooks must also be solved. In the comprehensive school today they are provided free of charge, in the intermediate school the conditions vary from one municipality to another and at the higher educational establishments the individual student bears the cost of textbooks.

6.2 If the individual is to be able to participate in education, he must also have the right to be free from his work while studying and return to his work after completing his studies. Similar rights have been ensured by legislation in cases of pregnancy and military service, and by agreement for persons taking, for example, trade union courses. Parliament has so far not favoured legislation concerning the right to leave of absence for persons taking a course of education. Another question is how periods of study should be treated from the social insurance aspect. The present social insurance systems are based on income from employment. If the individual loses his salary as a result of following a study course his social rights are today also affected accordingly. It may therefore be necessary to extend insurance protection during periods of education as well.

6.3 The over-riding question, however, is the financial conditions for the individual's studies.

Adults today receive an educational grant, which for a single person amounts to about 8,000 kroner annually, more than three-quarters of which is repayable. For each child under 16 years of age the adult student also receives an allowance of about 1,400 kroner, also repayable. These benefits are paid for adult students at intermediate school and higher educational level.

For persons on retraining courses the benefits are usually larger and are not repayable.

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The structure of the Swedish educational welfare system is based primarily on the theory of democratisation. As regards the intermediate school the educational grants may at the same time be seen as an element in the family allowance policy, and are paid - also on recruitment grounds - on the basis of family finances. At the higher educational level the educational grants system is based on the view that higher education leads to improved financial conditions for the individual, for which reason the greater part of the grant is repayable. If these conditions are not fulfilled, the repayment obligation lapses.

A fundamental question concerning the financing of recurrent education is whether, as in the present educational welfare system, the benefits should be payable solely to those who take a recognised course of education or whether they should be linked to the individual as in an insurance system. There is much to be said in favour of the latter approach.

A system of alternating education and wage-earning occupation may involve the risk, as noted, that those with a less favourable starting situation will not make use of the education offered. U 68 has questioned whether some form of control should therefore exist to ensure that the individual makes use of the opportunities of continued education, or whether there should even be some form of extended compulsory education. This idea is rejected, however, in view of the negative effects of compulsory measures. It is suggested instead that a programme of study should be drawn up for each individual. This would, of course, require extensive personnel and material resources.

Another way of stimulating the interest of people with social, financial or psychological handicaps is to use financial incentives. This is, of course, simpler to arrange if the benefits are linked and related primarily to the individual. A universal insurance system can work with different control instruments, e.g. a conscious favouring of groups with a short basic education. A system of this kind can also be used as an instrument of economic policy.

It cannot be denied, however, that an educational financing system of this kind involves considerable problems. Since it may be assumed that adult students and their families will demand roughly the same living standard and social

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security as previously, the economic consequences will be very considerable. The present forms of educational benefit within youth education may be affected as also, of course, may the demand for education of different kinds. One way of solving these problems is perhaps to work with the present educational welfare system as a base and build on to it a supplementary insurance type system.

During 1968 the government appointed a committee to draw up principles for the future financing of adult education. The work of this committee is of course an extremely important piece in the recurrent education puzzle.

7. In conclusion there is also reason to consider some questions relating to admission to recurrent education and to its internal structure.

The rules for admission to voluntary education have long been based on the view that formal merit should be the decisive factor. On many courses of study this led to overqualification. To counteract this tendency in the present educational system, a quota system has been introduced, together with rules which preclude the raising of a previous grade. Within local government and state adult education the rules are that admission shall be based on the applicant's actual study prospects, including participation in organisational work and popular education. A trial of this kind is now being made at the faculties of arts of the universities.

In a system of recurrent education the selection rules must be flexible and consistent with the principles adopted within adult education. With intermediate school attendance increasing, on the other hand, this problem becomes less urgent. In the future practically everyone will be qualified for continued education.

The students in a system of recurrent education will possess varying experience and, to some extent, also varying educational grounding. The older students have gaps in their basic education and are often unfamiliar with modern educational methods. The forms of teaching must therefore be strictly individualised and there must be differentiation of the educational goals for each group. The individual will compose his programme of studies more on the basis of his own needs than is done in youth education today, where the demands of society are a potent factor. The curricula may also have to

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be changed in a system of alternation between education and other work. In the balance between methodical training and learning of facts, U 68 points out, the development may be that the educational periods will be used chiefly for methodical training, exercising of the ability to acquire facts, and laborative elements, while the learning of facts will take place to a greater extent on the job or in concurrent private study.

Having regard to the individual goals of students, their participation in the planning of their education will be both necessary and natural. This tendency will, of course, be facilitated by the fact that the student groups will include adults who are used to planning their own work.

The role of the teacher will also be affected in a system of recurrent education. Teacher training has hitherto been aimed exclusively at youth education. As from 1970 there will be teacher training courses for adult education. Even today the teacher is being trained more as a tutor and guide than as an imparter of knowledge. He will be, states U 68, a participant in a group which together will plan the teaching for an object that may be a matter for debate and planning within the group. The teacher will have an important role in an educational system with many constituents. If the system is based on the principle that education should seek the student rather than the reverse, the teacher may need to be geographically mobile.

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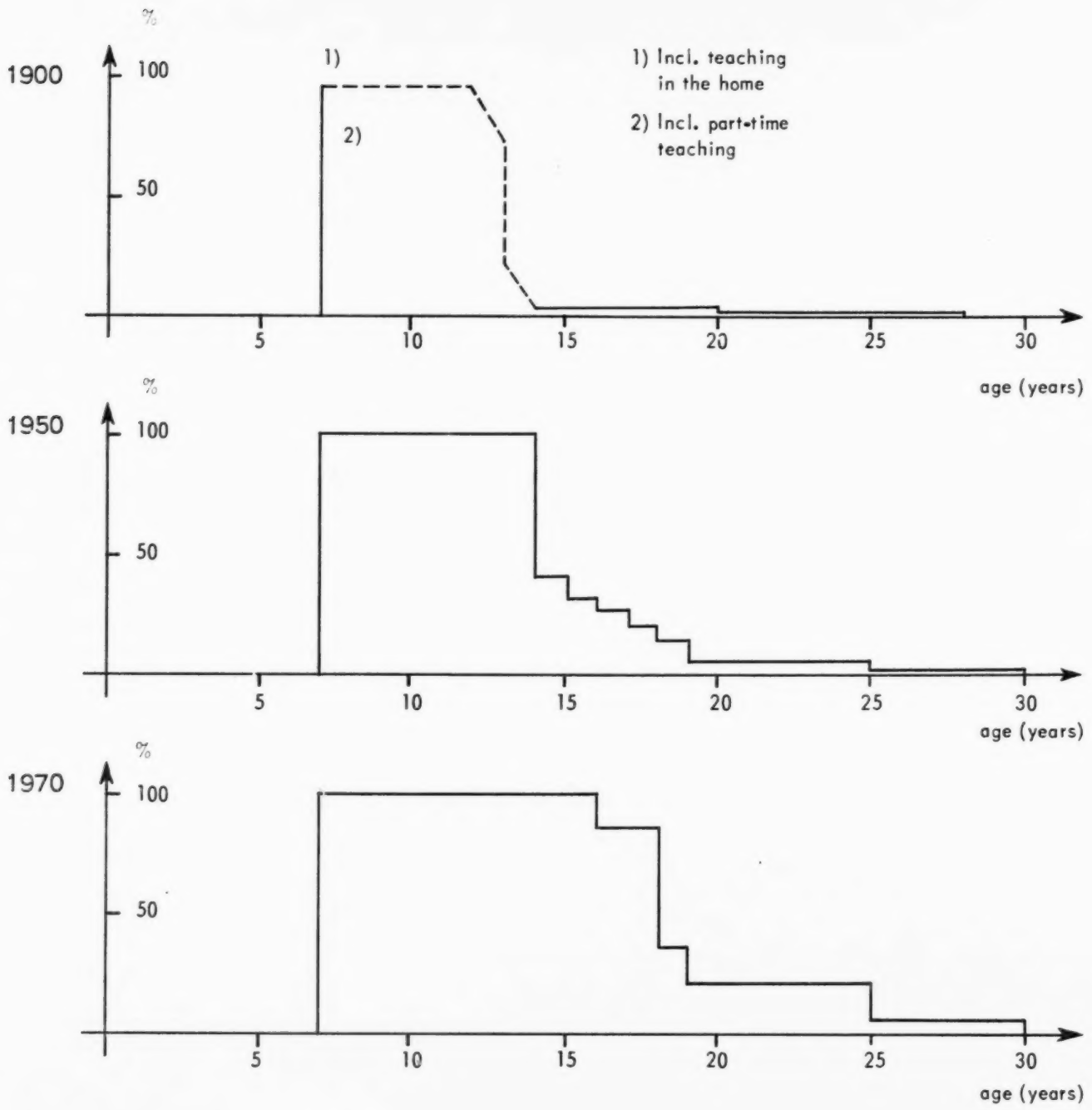
APPENDIX A

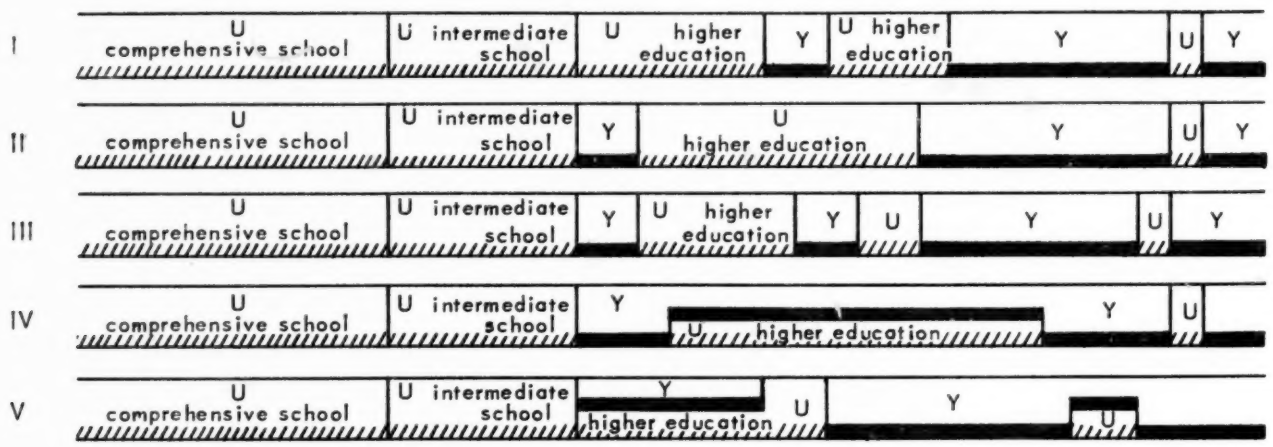
Percentage of population receiving education, by age, in the years 1900, 1950 and 1970

(The diagram for 1900 is based on uncertain data and probably indicates too high a percentage receiving education)



APPENDIX B

Some possible alternatives of recurrent education



U = education
Y = work in an occupation

I. Higher education continues directly from intermediate school. A period of higher education is followed by work in an occupation, after which higher education is completed. After some years in an occupation a brief educational period follows, perhaps a refresher or upgrading course with some specialisation.

II. From intermediate school to an occupation, after which higher education is completed in one sequence. Refresher or upgrading course after some period in an occupation.

III. Periods of occupational work both after intermediate school and between periods of higher education. Refresher or upgrading course after some period in an occupation.

IV. Part-time higher educational studies concurrently with an occupation. These commence after a period of occupational work following intermediate school. Refresher or upgrading course after a period in an occupation.

V. Part-time higher education starts concurrently with occupational work immediately after intermediate school. Final period of higher education is full-time. A later refresher or upgrading course may be taken on a part-time basis.

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